

**DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION**

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*Contra Costa County Board of  
Supervisors*

*Sacramento County Board of  
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*Central Delta Reclamation  
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*North Delta Reclamation Districts*

*South Delta Reclamation Districts*

*CA State Transportation Agency*

*CA Department of Food and  
Agriculture*

*CA Natural Resources Agency*

*CA State Lands Commission*

April 29, 2014

Bill Guthrie, Project Manager  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District  
1325 J Street, Room 1350  
Sacramento, California 95814-2922

Re: SPK-2014-00187 - Emergency Drought Barriers project

Dear Mr. Guthrie:

On behalf of the Delta Protection Commission, I am writing to comment on the emergency drought barriers proposed by the California Department of Water Resources.

The Commission understands the need to take extraordinary actions to minimize the intrusion of salinity into the interior Delta. On a conceptual level, the emergency drought barriers are a workable solution to the problems faced with minimal Delta outflows. However, there are several concerns about their installation and operation that we would like to express.

In regards to the north Delta barriers proposed for Steamboat and Sutter Sloughs, we are encouraged by the discussions taking place between North Delta Water Agency and Department of Water Resources that are intended to result in a memorandum of understanding regarding the installation, operation, and ultimate removal of the barriers in these locations. As this MOU has not yet been completed, we request the Corps consider the following operational features as it considers the terms under which it will grant a permit under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

- 1) Operating the barriers to ensure that water surface elevations below the barriers are maintained. While it would be ideal to operate the barriers in a way that guarantees water levels are maintained at normal summer water surface elevations, the Department should provide mitigation to farmers who experience water surface declines.
- 2) Operating the barriers and the culvert flows to ensure that water quality is maintained in compliance with the North Delta Water Agency contract.

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In addition, the rock barriers will have a navigational impact on Delta recreational boating. Although it is appreciated that DWR is considering a boat ramp to move smaller craft around the Steamboat Slough barrier, this does not address the navigational disruption to larger boats. The barriers should be constructed in a way that allows recreational boaters to pass through the barriers during daylight hours.  
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erik Vink', with a stylized, cursive script.

Erik Vink  
Executive Director